

Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

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English Language Arts Implementation

As K-12 teachers across the district, implement the newly adopted [English Language Arts curriculum](#), our Common Core Leadership Team collaborates to develop school action plans for next steps.

On August 16 and 17, 2012, a principal-identified group of MCPS teachers, counselors, and administrators gathered for the first Common Core Leadership Institute.

Part 2 of the Institute is scheduled for December 3 and will include representatives from area feeder schools.

Part 3 is scheduled for February 5. Part 4 is scheduled for April 16.

Mathematics Curriculum Review

In June, 60 professional educators from [MCPS](#), [Hellgate Elementary](#), and [Target Range School Districts](#) gathered to begin the important work of reviewing and revising our K-12 mathematics curriculum based on the Montana Common Core Standards.

The group developed significant background knowledge, common understanding of and commitment to the new standards with the intent that students meet progressively rigorous and relevant benchmarks throughout the grade levels and to assure that all students are college and career ready upon graduation.

In August and throughout the 2012-13 school year, the committee continues to develop K-12 math courses, learning targets, and integrated, hands-on, project-based lesson plans in addition to aligning supporting materials to the standards.

The committee's recommendations and the mathematics curriculum document will go before the MCPS Board of Trustees for adoption in the spring of 2013.

8 Mathematical Practices

How do you integrate the Mathematical Practice Standards into your lessons?

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity repeated reasoning.

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Check out the Montana OPI Common Core Website

- [Getting Started](#)
- [Professional Development](#)
- [English Language Arts](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Assessment](#)

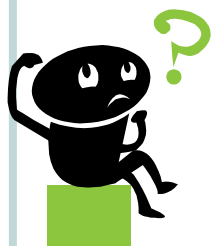
Using Text-Dependent Questions with Literature

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) call students to answer questions that require them to read and attain a deep understanding of text. These text dependent questions should be part of each day's instruction and can be used across the content areas.

When reading literature, students can answer text dependent questions at a variety of cognitive levels and can follow a certain progression of questioning (Fisher & Frey, 2012). For example, students might be asked to answer some initial questions for **general text understanding**, followed by some questions about **key details**.

Then, students can answer questions about **vocabulary** and **text structure**. Teachers can then guide students to answer questions aimed at the **purpose** of the text. Students will be challenged to understand the text deeply when they are asked to answer questions requiring them to make **inferences** about how parts of the text relate to the whole text.

Finally, students can answer questions that require them to state their **opinions**, **make arguments**, and **make intertextual connections** based on text evidence. Text-dependent questions require students to think critically about their reading. Students should also get in the routine of asking text dependent questions of themselves and of their peers as text is discussed throughout the day. Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2012). *Principal Leadership*. For more information, click [here](#).



Questions Students Should Ask While They Are Reading

(Source: D. Buehl, (2012) *Disciplinary Literacy: The Intersection with the Common Core*)

Questions for Any Subject:

1. How has this author changed what I understand?
2. What perspective or authority does the author bring to what he/she tells me?
3. How is this similar to (or different from) other texts I've read?
4. How can I connect what this author is telling me to understand something better?
5. What does this author want me to understand?
6. What do I need to remember to make sense of this text?

Questions for Literary Fiction:

1. Why is the author telling me this story and what theme might the author be explaining in this story?
2. Who is the author and how has the author's perspective influenced the telling of this story?
3. What literary techniques does the author use and what seems to be the purpose for using these techniques?
4. How can I connect this story to my life and experiences?

Pre-Kindergarten Curricula Review

The MCPS pre-kindergarten program provides an inclusive education for preschool-aged children with disabilities together with their peers in a joyful, safe, and nurturing environment. Students receive instruction in English Language Arts, mathematics, social/emotional and physical education. The mission is to provide a foundation for each child to become a lifelong learner, to prepare each child to become independent, to maximize high school readiness, and promote family involvement.

Each pre-kindergarten class is led by a certified teacher and supported by at least two para-educators trained in early childhood development and special education. Other professionals, such as a school psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and nurse, provide special education services in the classroom and are an integral part of the pre-kindergarten staff.

A committee of these professionals is currently reviewing and revising the pre-kindergarten English Language Arts and math curricula.

Indian Education For All (IEFA)

At their discretion, states adopting the Common Core State Standards are allowed to supplement with 15% of state-specific standards. In Montana, those supplemental standards are based on Indian Education For All. Check out :

- ◆ The MCPS IEFA webpage.
- ◆ The Montana Office of Public Instruction IEFA website.
- ◆ The upcoming CSPD workshop: Weaving the Common Core and IEFA through Teaching Middle School and High School Primary Source Documents
- ◆ The OPI IEFA Early Childhood webpage

Smarter Balanced Assessment

To help achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, Montana joined the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), a 30-state organization charged with developing an assessment system for the Common Core State Standards.

The SMARTER system will:

- Align with the Montana Common Core Standards;
- Focus on support for teachers through professional development and instructional materials;
- Provide a comprehensive reporting system for teachers, administrators, students, and parents;
- Ensure that all students, regardless of disability, language, or economic status, are able to show what they know and can do; and
- Offer online formative assessment processes and tools, as well as computer adaptive online interim and summative assessments.

Smarter Balanced Links

A [Summary](#) of Core Components of the test beginning spring 2015

[Sample Items and Performance Tasks](#)

[Draft Achievement Level Descriptors for English Language Arts](#)

[Draft Achievement Level Descriptors for Mathematics](#)

